

Iowa Autism Council Meeting

Draft Minutes 9/14/2016

Meeting minutes taken by **Beth Buehler-Sapp**

- Present:** James Curry, Erika Hertel, Angela Burke-Boston, Theresa Croonquist, Steve Muller, Connie Fanselow, Wendy Trotter, Tara Underwood-Levin, Jenny Phan, James Paprocki, Susan Etschedit, and Beth Buehler-Sapp.
- Absent:** Matthew O'Brien, Mary Jackson, Becky Harker, Brandon Reese Arkland, Rachel Heiss, and Sean Casey.
- Guests:** Peggy Swails from Child Health Specialty Clinics @ the UIHC RAP Program.
Jessica Gallegos from UIHC-RAP program.
Thomas Mayes from Iowa Department of Education.
- Zoom:** Jan Turbes, Angela Logsdon, and Jeffrey Jennings.

James Curry called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. Participants introduced themselves and welcomed new member, Susan Etscheidt.

Council Members reviewed the draft minutes from the September 14, 2016 meeting. Erika Hertel made a motion to approve the minutes and Steve Muller seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Strategic Plan Update:

Wendy and Peggy gave an update on the strategic plan. They continue to work with consultants from the National Autism Leadership Collaborative to utilize "collective impact" to help move the strategic plan forward. At this time, they are focusing on the first focus area in the plan, "Get a Good Start". They would like to see if they can find a facilitator assistance with this work. The National Autism Leadership Summit is November 14-15 – Wendy Trotter, Peggy Swails and Erika Hertel are all attending.

Wendy Trotter also reported that there is some additional work being initiated at the Department of Education regarding developing a professional development framework that will help guide AEAs and schools in professional development activities on evidence-based practices for individuals with ASD. This work is still in its infancy, but it could begin to address some of the goals within the focus area of "Obtain needed services".

Regional Autism Assistance Program update:

Peggy reported that they were not awarded the HRSA grant that they had applied for. They scored a 96/100 and all the feedback regarding their application was positive, but were not awarded any funding. However, RAP was able to allocate funding, from existing funding sources, to obtain time from Kelly Pelzel to work on some initiatives for RAP. Her exact role is still being defined, but they hope she will assist with telehealth efforts.

RAP is also utilizing funds from an extension of their current HRSA grant to wrap up work related to that grant. They are putting together a "parent guide", which will be similar to Autism Speaks' "First 100 days" resources, but with Iowa specific resources.

Case Law Update:

Thomas Mayes, an attorney with the Iowa Department of Education, provided the council with a case law update. He discussed 4 cases where autism was a factor in the case:

Case 1: Renee Snetzer v. Iowa Department of Education; Cedar Rapids Community School District; Grant Wood AEA

<http://media.ca8.uscourts.gov/opndir/15/08/142091P.pdf>

Case 2: Brandon and Nichole Sims, on the behalf of their disabled daughter, B.S v. Fort Osage R-1 School District

<http://media.ca8.uscourts.gov/opndir/11/06/103419P.pdf>

Case 3: Park Hill School District v. Kevin and Cheryl Dass, Individually and as parents of D.D, a minor, and K.D., a minor

<http://media.ca8.uscourts.gov/opndir/11/09/102187P.pdf>

Case 4: United States of America v. Stephen D. Morais

<http://media.ca8.uscourts.gov/opndir/12/03/111793P.pdf>

Thomas also introduced a case that is being considered by the US Supreme Court. This case is a service animal case, but the argument is around the meaning of “appropriate” in free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Currently, appropriate is most often interpreted to mean “some educational benefit”, but the argument is that that bar is set too low, and that it should be “meaningful educational benefit”. If accepted, this case will be argued this fall with a decision in the spring.

Autism Support Program (ASP) update:

Connie Fanselow reported that updated administrative rules for ASP were noticed, public comment ended September 6, 2016, They received one public comment. The updated rules will be published in November and then finalized and put into effect the beginning of the year.

Additional updates:

- With the new modifications to the bill related to ASP eligibility criteria now in effect:
 - There have been 3-4 new applicants who meet the increased income level “not to exceed 500% of the federal poverty level”.
 - There was also one new applicant over the age of 9
- Overall, there have been 18 applications since January 1, 2016 – 10 approved and a few still pending.
- Numbers of those receiving services fluctuate between 14-15 kids per month.
- Still hoping to shift administrative duties to the MCOs, but not sure when that will go into effect. Until then, continue to funnel application through Connie.
- Three new providers have expressed interest becoming approved providers for ASP. DHS is working on getting them enrolled:
 - Opportunity Village in Clear Lake, Iowa
 - Seasons Center in Sioux Center, Iowa and Spencer, Iowa.
 - Behavioral Care Specialists in Rock Valley, Iowa (actually based out of South Dakota)

BCBA/BCaBA education grants program update:

Public comment session was held on August 17th. IDPH is hoping to post RFP in October and have funding available to students in January 2017. A few changes that went into effect following the legislative review include: 1) inclusion of online accredited programs and 2) an “agreement between the applicant and department that the applicant will assist in supervising an individual working toward board certification as a behavior analyst or assistant behavior analyst or to consult with schools and service providers that provide services and supports to individuals with autism.”

IDPH will notify Wendy and Sean when the RFP is posted and they will share with council members. And then we will need to spread the word as widely as possible to ensure plenty of applicants.

Steve Muller mentioned that we really need to celebrate this accomplishment.

Identification of 2017 priorities:

Discussion was had with council members to determine priorities for 2017 for the year end legislative report. Discussions centered around:

- Insurance reform – Jenny Phan reported that Judith Ursitti from Autism Speaks will be joining us for our November meeting to talk about insurance reform. It was suggested that the council put together an information sheet with 4-7 talking points utilizing data to help ensure a cohesive message.
- ASP modifications – Discussion about whether to push for further modifications to the ASP to reflect our previous suggested modifications. Steve Muller expressed concern with asking for too much at once – that there is danger in asking for both ASP modifications and insurance reform. He proposed we leave the ASP alone for now, celebrating the victories we have achieved, and focus on other priorities for next year.
- Minimum wage – Steve Muller brought up concerns regarding the proposed minimum wage increase and the formula for reimbursement rates for providers that is not currently being honored by MCOs – especially for adult providers. Mechanism needs to be in place to allow recalculation of reimbursement rates if minimum wage increases.

The following priorities were agreed upon for 2017:

1. Insurance reform
2. Continued work on implementing the strategic plan
3. Minimum wage / reimbursement rate formula
4. Federal HCBS requirement for being in and of the community (settings rule) – in Iowa need to file legislation to require the state to **not exceed** the federal rules/requirements

James will begin working on the legislative report. Hope to have a final draft ready for approval for our November meeting.

James Curry made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Steve Muller seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:15pm.